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## NOTES FROM THE MEDICAL PRESS

IN CHARGE OF

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**PAINLESS PARTURITION.**—A writer in the *Medical Record* relates his experience with heroin as a means of relieving the pain attending childbirth. He gives one-twelfth grain of heroin hydrochlorate, hypodermically, as soon as the pains begin. Within twenty minutes the patient becomes drowsy and no longer suffers from the pains. The need of bearing down when she feels the contractions is impressed upon her. The physician leaves the patient, sometimes for an hour or two until labor is well-advanced. The effect of the one-twelfth grain dose lasts usually about three hours. It may then be repeated or a one-twelfth or one-thirty-sixth grain given. One-twelfth grain inhibits the sensory nerves but does not affect the motor nerves. Larger doses retard the pains. Its use lessens the condition of shock that follows labor and is apparently harmless to the child. The writer believes that heroin used as in the morphine-scopolamine treatment would give similar results unattended by danger.

**RINGWORM OF THE SCALP.**—The *New York Medical Journal* states that iodine combined with genuine goose grease is a valuable remedy for this affection, particularly in the early stages. Among other remedies, sulphur in 20 per cent ointment with 10 per cent naphthol is recommended. When inflammation is absent the parasiticide ointment chosen cannot be too vigorously applied.

**THE CARE OF INFANTS.**—In a paper on this subject in a German medical journal it is remarked that adults require different amounts of food at different times and under different bodily conditions and the same applies to infants. The amount of food should be adjusted, within certain limits, to the child's desires. If he is manifestly hungry a quarter or a half hour before feeding time he should be fed. Often a child can be made to assimilate its nourishment satisfactorily only after the nurse has carried it about, played with it or sung to it. It is necessary to individualize in each child's treatment.

**PINEWOOD SAWDUST AS A SURGICAL DRESSING.**—The *British Medical Journal* recommends the use of pinewood sawdust for operative wounds and septic cases of all kinds. Sawdust from the softer kinds of wood is best. It is sifted twice, the first sieve, number eight, contains eight threads to the inch, the second size, number forty, forty threads to

the inch. The very fine particles are discarded. The sawdust remaining on number forty size is put into bags made of butter muslin, in sizes regulated by the purpose for which they are required. These bags are filled two-thirds full and closed with colored thread. They are then sterilized by steam in the same manner as other dressings. After use they are emptied, the sawdust thrown away and the bags washed, boiled and dried for future use.

**HOT AIR TREATMENT OF GRANULATING SURFACES.**—The *Journal of the American Medical Association* quoting from the *Policlinico*, says that an Italian surgeon noticed that after a burn the parts left exposed to the air healed more rapidly than regions dressed with various salves, or merely shut off from the air. This suggested that keeping the surface dry would be beneficial, to obtain which a jet of hot air was applied. Rebellious burns promptly healed under from fifteen to thirty applications.

**DRUGS AND THE WAR.**—The *Medical Times* suggests that the shortage of drugs caused by the European war should be an immense stimulation to the domestic production of drugs. It states that there is enough digitalis growing wild in Oregon and Washington to supply the world. Cinchona can be obtained directly from South America, instead of through London and Amsterdam.

**RED CROSS SERVICE.**—It is stated that the Russian Red Cross is a splendidly organized force, with vast resources, both financial and institutional. Moscow alone voted it five million dollars on August first. The Austrian and Japanese Red Cross are also strong.

**CONTAGIOUS-DISEASE NURSES.**—For about a year and a half the city of Detroit has maintained twelve nurses for the special purpose of caring for cases of infectious disease. A report of the results is given in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. The conclusion arrived at is that the contagious disease nurse is the most valuable agent of the health officer and the one best calculated to induce quarantined persons to take the proper precautions. The nurses are graduates, registered, or qualified for registration, and are each paid a thousand dollars a year. As soon as a case of disease appears the home is placarded and is immediately visited by a nurse. If the patient is sent to the hospital she disinfects the room. Otherwise she isolates the case in one room so as to permit the wage earner to work and yet sleep at home. She instructs the family in disinfection and sanitation, furnishes supplies if necessary, and netting to screen the doors and windows of the sick room. Frequent visits are made to see that directions are followed.

**SOFTENING HARD WATER.**—It is said that if hard water is frozen and the ice melted the resultant water is soft. This is explained by the fact that when water freezes the salts present in it are left behind so that the ice is very nearly pure water. Hard water can be softened by mixing it with milk of lime which converts the carbonic acid into calcium carbonate and causes the precipitation of the calcium carbonate present in the water.

**DIAGNOSIS OF SMALLPOX.**—A German medical journal says that the distribution of the eruption seems to be the most important point in differentiating smallpox from similar eruptions. It affects the regions exposed to the weather and to friction from clothes, such as the soles of the feet, etc., while the eruption in varicella seeks out the most sheltered spots.

**ERUPTIONS FOLLOWING OPERATIONS.**—The *Journal of the American Medical Association* quoting from *Surgery, Gynecology and Obstetrics*, says that eruptions occur, particularly after operations, on parts abundantly supplied with sympathetic nerve fibres, as the pelvic organs. They occur after any of the common anesthetics, ether, chloroform or nitrous oxide. There is a lack of constitutional symptoms, an erythematous or papular eruption with some itching and an elevated temperature. The eruption may simulate measles, scarlatina and the so-called drug exanthems. The exciting cause varies, drugs, enemata, anesthetics, and operative shock are included. The underlying cause is vaso-motor disturbance, due, probably, to irritation to the sympathetic nervous system.

**THE SPLEEN IN BLOOD FORMATION.**—The *Journal of Experimental Medicine* reports experiments in examining the blood entering the spleen and leaving it by the splenic vein. It is concluded that the spleen is a blood-forming organ of prime importance in animal metabolism.

**BLOOD WASHED AND RETURNED TO BODY.**—Two Russian experimenters report having removed blood from the bodies of rabbits, washed it and returned it without causing morbid symptoms. The blood was taken from the carotid artery, drawn into test tubes containing 1.5 per cent solution of sodium citrate to prevent coagulation. One-half of the total amount of the animal's blood was thus withdrawn. The washed blood, after treatment with normal salt solution, was injected through a vein in the ear. It is thought that when the blood is saturated with toxic substances, blood-letting followed by re-introduction into the vascular system of the blood that has been removed and washed, ought to be of great clinical value.